

Governor Jack Markell Presents Donated Books to Terry Children's Center



Wilmington – Applauding the public's generosity during a month-long book drive in February, today Governor Jack Markell presented a portion of 3,000 books donated to the Terry Children's Center (TCC). Joined by Secretary Jennifer Ranji of the Delaware Children's Department and TCC staff, Governor Markell indicated that the large stacks of books displayed behind him represented only a fraction of the donated reading materials being presented. The book drive, entitled "Enjoy Reading? Share the Love," was publicized primarily through social media including Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and YouTube.

"I am constantly inspired by the goodwill and supportive nature of Delawareans," said Governor Markell. "We're finding more frequently, that the power of social media can be harnessed for the collective good of society. In this case, it will enhance the quality of life and academic enrichment for the children served here at the Terry Children's Center."

Operated by the Delaware Children's Department, the TCC provides services to children ages 6 – 12, who may be experiencing one or more of a variety of mental health challenges. Both residential and day treatment services are available. The donated books will further help support the children's treatment efforts.

"We're grateful to the Governor and his staff for spearheading this effort and for the overwhelming response by the public," said Secretary Ranji. "These books will provide increased opportunities for children to have focused, one-on-one interaction with not only staff, but also their parents as they read these new selections to them."

Also joining the Governor and Department staff for the event were representatives from the Delaware Division of Libraries and AmeriCorps, both of which were recognized for the significant role they played in the book drive. Eight State Library sites across Delaware served as collection sites for the books, including: Wilmington, Hockessin, Kirkwood, Newark, Appoquinimink, Dover, Bridgeville, and Millsboro Public Libraries.

"The state's libraries played an important part in this effort, which had a simple mission but will have long-lasting positive impact on our young people at the Terry Center," said Secretary of State Jeffrey Bullock, who oversees the Division of Libraries. "Our libraries play so many important roles in our communities, and they continue to make Delaware a great place to live and grow."

AmeriCorps members were instrumental in coordinating pick up of the books from each of the sites throughout the campaign and delivering them to the Children's Department so that staff could screen them for age and subject matter appropriateness. The heart of AmeriCorps mission is service to others.

"The Share the Love Book Drive was a great way for Delaware's AmeriCorps members to help meet another community need and make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children," said Charles A. Harris, Social Services Administrator and Delaware AmeriCorps Program Director at DHSS. "For our members, it was an opportunity to join in and learn as the state engaged the public and various partners in serving others."

The Children's Department provides services to children who

have been abused, neglected, are dependent, have mental health or substance problems, have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts, as well as prevention services targeted toward all youth. For more information, please visit www.kids.delaware.gov.